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METHOD AND APPARATUS FOR WEAPON CONTROL AND AUTHORIZATION

CROSS-REFERENCE TO RELATED APPLICATIONS

This application claims benefit of U.S. Provisional Patent Application No. 61/747,571 filed on Dec. 31, 2012 and entitled "METHOD AND APPARATUS FOR WEAPON CONTROL AND AUTHORIZATION," in the names of Robert Van Burdine, Dorothy Devine Burdine and Alfred Lee Devine, which is hereby incorporated by reference in its entirety.

BACKGROUND OF THE INVENTION

This invention relates to control and authorization for use of a device such as a weapon, and in particular to the apparatus and method for weapons control and authorization at the individual or group level, particularly in structured environments such as schools and military establishments.

This invention also relates to control and authorization for use, and in particular to the apparatus and method for control and authorization at the individual or group level, particularly in structured environments such as schools, military establishments, commercial vehicle operation and controlled living facilities.

Schools and other institutions where people regularly come and go are occasionally subject to assault by one or more armed assailants. While these attacks are rare in the United States, in other countries such as Israel, the incidence can be much higher. The results of such attacks are devastating, often resulting in the deaths of children and personnel. There is a clear consensus of the need to limit or prevent these attacks.

Some have advocated the use of armed guards, or even armed teachers, as a means of stopping such attacks before they can proceed to their devastating end. Others point to the issues of introducing weapons into the classroom environment.

School shootings clearly have a political impact, spurring some to ask for more stringent gun control laws. In the United States, the National Rifle Association is opposed to such laws, and some groups have called for fewer gun control laws in general, citing cases of armed students ending shootings and halting further loss of life, and claiming that the prohibitions against carrying a gun in schools do not deter the gunmen. They point to cases such as shootings at Columbine and Red Lake High Schools, where the presence of an armed police officer alone did not prevent the shootings.

Areas in the US have allowed "armed classrooms" in an attempt to deter or truncate future attacks, presumably by changing helpless victims into armed defenders. In 2008, Harrold Independent School District in Texas became the first public school district in the U.S. to allow teachers with state-issued firearm-carry permits to carry their arms in the classroom; special additional training and ricochet-resistant ammunition were required for participating teachers. Students at the University of Utah have been allowed to carry permitted concealed pistols since a State Supreme Court decision in 2006. In addition to Utah, Wisconsin and Mississippi each have legislation that allow students, faculty and employees to carry concealed weapons on their public university's campuses. Other states have enacted various legislations and rules in response to the need to defend the classroom.

The issue with arming teachers is the introduction of deadly force into the classroom that is present at all times.

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Control and security issues with these weapons, as well as clear regulation and authorization for the use of force remain current issues that are addressed by the present invention.

Other uses for the present invention include the control of authorization for any device such as vehicles and cook stoves. The control through authorization of times and periods for the operation of commercial transport such as over-the-road freight (18 wheelers), trains, taxis, and equipment is made possible through the present invention. Hunting regulation is facilitated by only allowing authorizable weapons and issuing authorizations for specific individuals for specific time periods. Security is provided through the present invention by the authorized use of security doors, and protection is afforded to the elderly or infirm by maintaining authorization over cook stoves and filling bath tubs that may cause a fire or water damage if inadvertently left unattended. This invention may also have applications in correctional facilities and military operations.

SUMMARY OF THE INVENTION

The invention relates to an apparatus such as a weapon that senses the contact of an individual through capacitive, inductive or resistive means, and may require a security code that is entered by the individual. When such conditions are met an apparatus such as a weapon is authorized and loss of contact with the individual de-authorizes the apparatus. In this manner an individual with a correct security code can be authorized to fire the weapon, and another individual without a security code can not fire the weapon. If the weapon is taken from an authorized individual, the momentary loss of contact with the individual is detected and the weapon de-authorizes preventing its use. The invention may be further comprised of a received signal such as a radio signal, that is received by the weapon before authorization is complete, with the loss of the radio signal de-authorizing the weapon. In this case a central authority can control the use of weapons.

The invention also relates to apparatuses that generate an authorization signal on the skin of an individual, an operable device comprising of a receiving apparatus that will enable the device to be operated only when an authorizing signal is received through contact, and further optional security apparatus comprising of a containment device that restricts access by an authorized user until authorization is given by a controlling authority. The invention enables the operation, by authorized users, of devices such as vehicles, commercial transport, mobile field artillery, industrial equipment, missiles, aircraft, security doors, cooking equipment, medical devices, and tools.

The invention further relates to apparatuses that generate an authorization signal on the skin of an individual, a weapon comprised of a receiving apparatus that will enable the weapon to be operated only when an authorizing signal is received through contact with the user, and further security apparatus comprised of a containment device that restricts access by an authorized user until authorization is given by a controlling authority. The invention enables the introduction of weapons to a weapons free environment, such as a school, during times of attack, while, during normal operations, completely restricting access.

Embodiments of the invention provide for the safe storage of weapons and authorizing devices in a weapons free structured environment such as a school or classroom, the access to these items during times of authorized use such as an attack by an armed intruder, the authorization for use of the weapons by authorized individuals, and the de-authorization of the weapons after the threat has passed, enabling a plurality of